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Current
search for the charismatic personality ended on too much between-persons variance. Conger's search is for charismatic behaviors rather than personality traits. He sought behaviors at each of four stages of leadership: sensing opportunity and formulating a vision, articulating the vision, building trust in the vision, and achieving the vision.

What are the behaviors that contribute to charisma? Drawing from his own work, the literature, and public examples, Conger finds these: **Stage One**: The leader demonstrates an unusual sensitivity to constituents' needs that causes him to seek radical change; he or she has an unusual ability to see deficiencies in the present situation. **Stage Two**: The leader possesses different goals, with a profound sense of strategic vision and idealized goals that challenge the status quo. The goals are communicated differently; the leader emphasizes dissatisfaction with the status quo while offering the vision as the best alternative. The leader is seen as more confident, expert, dedicated, and with more concern for followers. **Stage Three**: Trust is built through unconventional expertise, self-sacrifice, and personal risks. **Stage Four**: More extensive use is made of personal example, role modeling, and reliance on unconventional tactics and empowerment. The likelihood that a leader will be seen as charismatic depends on the number and intensity of the behaviors and the perceived relevance of these to the situation. At some point, a critical mass is reached, and the leader is seen as charismatic.

Implications for organizations consider the dark side of charisma as well as ways of developing and managing exceptional leadership. All of this is presented in a systematic, step-by-step fashion; each chapter was interesting and thought provoking.

The discussions raised two issues for me, one methodological and one organizational, both mentioned by Conger but dismissed too lightly. From a methodological standpoint, the information gathered as background makes an interesting essay, but it falls short of a rigorous database of research on charisma. Too little evidence is presented, and references are frequently to writers focusing on effective leadership, not to those focusing specifically on charisma. Perhaps the most unsettling, Conger and Kotter often use the same examples—Scandinavian Airlines, Mary Kay, American Express Travel Related Services—but with Conger arguing charisma and Kotter illustrating the importance of little l leadership. Also, if charisma indeed results from leaders doing different things more often, intensively, and with more relevance beyond some critical point, is studying those beyond the critical point a good way to learn something more broadly applicable? Do we really want to teach our master of business administration graduates the skill of appearing to be an expert or using unconventional tactics?

From an organizational standpoint, the issue raised is, How many charismatic leaders can one organization tolerate? A common theme that comes through many of Conger's descriptions is posturing, self-interest, and absorption bordering on (or crossing into) narcissism. Conger's description of the dark side underplays the disruption and human costs a charismatic may cause. Managing charisma may be oxymoronic.

This is an idea book. Most of us who see leadership in organizations, from whatever vantage point, will find that reading the book will stimulate our thinking as we observe our leaders. It has already caused one to ask a fishing partner, now devoted full time to fishing after 13 splits in Walmart stock, "What did Sam Walton do that made him so persuasive?" His nebulous reply suggested that although behavior is enlightening, the old magic is still there.

**References**


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**The New Wave in Nurture**

**Lawrence V. Harper**

**The Nurture of Human Behavior**


**Review by**

**Eric Turkheimer**

Lawrence V. Harper, professor and chair in the Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences, Division of Human Development and Family Studies, at the University of California, Davis, is coauthor, with R. Q. Bell, of Child Effects on Adults. Eric Turkheimer, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Virginia (Charlottesville), is coeditor, with E. D. Bigler and R. A. Yeo, of Neuropsychological Function and Brain Imaging.

Nurture is the hard part of the nature–nurture equation. There has been no shortage of debate about the magnitude and mechanisms of genetic effects on behavior, but the obvious effects of some single genes and the accumulation of a century of twin and adoption studies have at least established a consistent scientific method for the study of genetic effects on behavior.

Although no one seriously questions the presence of environmental effects on the development of behavior, nurture has proven more difficult than nature to measure. There are no environmental twins, so there can be no environmental twin studies. Whereas we know that monozygotic twins are (on average) exactly twice as similar genetically as fraternal twins, the amount of environment shared by two individuals is virtually impossible to quantify. The environmental component of the nature–nurture equation is often manifest only as a remainder term, the difference between the monozygotic twin correlation and unity. But how does the environment produce differences among individuals, and what aspects of the environment are important? It is ironic that the most compelling paradigm for the study of environmental effects on behavior has emerged neither from human behavior genetics nor from development psychology. While genetically and environmentally inclined psychologists paid lip service to the idea that both genes and environment were required for the development of any behavior, a generation of developmental psychologists was charting the complexities of gene–environment coaction in exquisite detail.

The initial focus of these psychobiological investigations was at the molecular or neuronal level, and the subjects were laboratory animals. More recently, led by the pioneering theoretical and empirical work of Gilbert Gottlieb, developmental psychologists have extended the paradigm to the behavior of whole animals and finally to human behavior. Thorough reviews chart a course of gene–environmental interactions that was built on a foundation of animal research.
and finally to human development and behavior. The Nurture of Human Behavior reviews these empirical advances and charts a course for future investigations of gene–environment interactions in humans. Harper presents a model of nature and nurture in terms of developmental and evolutionary biology and then applies the model to developmental psychology.

As Harper describes it, the paradigm rests on two fundamental principles. The first, adaptation, holds that human behavior evolved as the result of natural selection. The second, reductionism, asserts that behavior— even complex behavior—is best understood by reference to its underlying biology. The second principle is more controversial than the first, but Harper provides some compelling reasons for undertaking an unabashedly biological investigation of developmental psychology. He suggests that some of the traditional dichotomies that separate psychology in biology can be synthesized in a framework of psychologically enlightened developmental biology. For example, the distinction between maturation and learning can be more rigorously and less divisively realized if one proceeds from the principle that all development represents the result of an interaction between a biological program and an environment that initiates and regulates it. In such a model, biological systems requiring environments that are routinely available to all organisms are said to mature, whereas those requiring specific, highly structured environments are said to be learned.

Similarly but even more important, the book promises a way out of the nature–nurture dilemma. Harper’s argument begins with the assertion that analyses of the genetics of behavior that are concerned with the partitioning of genetic and environmental variance do not apply to the development of individual organisms, for which a biological program and an environmental context are always absolute requirements. This argument, of course, has been made many times before, but one way to characterize the importance of the psychological contribution is that it has taken a banner and turned it into a science. The first section of the book documents the path from genotype to biological phenotype in compelling detail. At every point, the role of the environment in the regulation of genetic development can be specifically recognized and studied.

There can be no doubt about the justification of attempting to apply these principles to psychological development. The ultimate value of the model in the psychological realm, however, will depend not on its theoretical justification but rather on its empirical success. Although it is too early to reach definitive judgments, Harper’s efforts appear to meet with varied degrees of success, and there may be something to learn from the pattern of success and failure.

The two chapters on infancy and early childhood cover such topics as prenatal relations with mother, motor development, social responsiveness, attachment, play, and peer relations. The results are nearly as compelling as those in more traditional areas of biology: Harper maps the exquisite interplay of relations among the young child, its genetic endowment, and the environment. The role of the environment in acceleration or retardation of asynchronous growth processes mirrors neuronal processes that Harper has documented in earlier chapters; the evolutionary significance of developmental patterns is presented convincingly, although one sometimes wonders whether the evolutionary hypothesis is flexible enough to explain any behavior it confronts.

It was not until the chapter covering cognition that I began to wonder about the place of individual differences in the psychobiological paradigm. The development of cognition is presented in an updated Piagetian context, and once again it is completely successful in translating recent research in this area into the language of gene–environment interaction. Cognition in childhood, however, differs from infant development in that individual differences begin to become more pronounced, more stable, and therefore more clearly the focus of the nature–nurture dilemma. The index of The Nurture of Human Behavior does not contain an entry for intelligence, let alone IQ. The reader’s outlook on this omission may determine the overall reaction to the book. Many, no doubt, will be pleased that the book remains on the firmer scientific ground of species-typical behavior, eschewing the scientific and ideological swamp in which the genetics of individual differences sometimes seems to be permanently mired. For me, however, there is simply no denying that cognition has two aspects: Humans are intelligent as a species, and some are more intelligent than others. Although Harper achieves a palatable sense of scientific sturdiness and progress by focusing on species-typical behavior, the nature–nurture problem has, for better or worse, always been about individual differences.

The omission of individual differences is most telling in the chapter on personality. Harper gets as far as species-typical behavior will take him in this area, which is not very far. The development of self-image and conscience are covered with characteristic thoroughness and insight, but the entire realm of individual differences in personality is ignored. The word extraversion, for example, does not appear. The chapter concludes with a short section, subtitled Individual Differences and Early Experience, which is limited to a discussion of birth order and father absence, two unpromising candidates for the explanation of the nurture of individual differences in personality.

It may be that Harper’s principles of adaptation and reductionism do not apply as well to individual differences as they do to species-typical behavior. Although it can certainly be argued that it is adaptive for organisms to alter behavior in response to variation in environmental stimulation, it is a long way from such a generalization to an explanation of why some children succeed in school and others fail. And reductionism? Faced with the fact that children in the same family are almost as different in personality as random children, one suspects that Harper reaches for birth order because the more obvious alternative—the infinitely complex path of individuals experiencing their lives—does not reduce very well.

Harper is not alone in this regard. Indeed, the nature of environmental effects on individual differences in behavior is among the greatest unsolved theoretical problems in psychology. The contrast between successful scientific investigation of species-typical development and the ideological morass of individual differences should not lead us into dismissing the problem of individual differences as either solved, hopeless, or not worth the effort.

In the last paragraph of the book, Harper attributes “our meager success in identifying the antecedents and correlates of human behavioral variation” to the “profound lack of detailed descriptions of either human environments or human behavioral variation” (p. 214). If the methods of careful observation of the interaction of genotype and environment turn out to be as productive for the study of individuals as they have been for species-typical behavior, Harper will have made a landmark contribution. In any case, the book succeeds as a provocative review of empirical research with an impressively broad scope and as an exemplary work of theoretical psychology.